

Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 069982
ORIGIN EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 AGRE-00 AID-05 COME-00
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY
INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: EAGR, UNWFC

SUBJECT: WORLD FOOD COUNCIL (WFC) FOURTH SESSION

ROME FOR FODAG

1. SUMMARY: A SERIES OF MEETINGS OVER THE PAST WEEK BETWEEN CONCERNED AGENCIES AND ACTING WFC DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR HARRY WALTERS HAS REVEALED A SUBSTANTIAL MEASURE OF AGREEMENT CONCERNING THE CONTENT AND DESIRED OUTCOME OF THE FOURTH SESSION. WE UNDERSTAND THAT WALTERS WILL OVERSEE THE PREPARATION OF THE SUBSTANTIVE AGENDA AND POSITION PAPERS FOR THE WFC, RECEIVING ONLY GENERAL GUIDANCE FROM WFC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR HANNAH AND PRESIDENT TANCO. END SUMMARY.

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2. WALTERS BELIEVES AS WE DO, THAT THE PRIMARY FOCUS OF DISCUSSIONS SHOULD BE ON INCREASING FOOD PRODUCTION AND IMPROVING DISTRIBUTION. HE SEES THE PROPOSAL FOR PREPARING AND IMPLEMENTING NATIONAL FOOD PLANS FOR SELECTED COUNTRIES, AS THE CORNERSTONE OF THAT EFFORT. IMPROVING NUTRITION WILL ALSO BE A PRIMARY CONCERN, I.E. CONSIDERATION OF THE REPORT OF THE ACC SUBCOMMITTEE ON NUTRITION. REMAINDER OF SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSION SHOULD BE DEVOTED TO GENERAL ASPECTS OF WHERE THINGS STAND ON AN INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM OF FOOD SECURITY RESERVES, THE 500,000 TON INTERNATIONAL RESERVE FOR

EMERGENCIES, AND A NEW FOOD AID CONVENTION. WE ANTICIPATE THAT THIS WILL BE SUBSTANTIALLY A REVIEW OF THE RESULTS OF THE IWA. OTHER TOPICS SUCH AS AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND AGRARIAN REFORM AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT ARE INTENDED AS INFORMATION ITEMS ONLY. OUTPUT OF THE MEETING SHOULD CONSIST OF A REPORT AND APPROXIMATELY SIX PARAGRAPHS OUTLINING MINISTERIAL VIEWS ON THE FOLLOWING TOPICS: INCREASED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, GRAIN RESERVES, A FOOD AID CONVENTION, THE EMERGENCY RESERVE, NUTRITION AND PRODUCTION INPUTS.

3. ON THE FOOD PLANS PROPOSAL, WALTERS WAS CLEARLY PLEASED AT POSITIVE PRELIMINARY RESPONSE OF U.S., WHICH AGREED THAT TOPIC COULD BE USEFULLY EXPLORED AT MEETING AND THAT U.S. WOULD BE WILLING TO PARTICIPATE IN PREPARATION OF PLANS. WE STATED THAT WHILE OUR PARTICIPATION CLEARLY IMPLIED A USG COMMITMENT TO PROVIDING ITS SHARE OF THE RESOURCES NECESSARY TO IMPLEMENT SUCH PLANS, IT SHOULD BE EQUALLY UNDERSTOOD THAT DEVELOPING COUNTRY RECIPIENTS WERE COMMITTING TO AN EXAMINATION OF AND NECESSARY CHANGES IN THEIR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE POLICIES. OTHER DONORS WOULD LIKELY INSIST ON THIS ALSO. WALTERS AGREED, ADDING THAT THERE WAS ALSO A NEED TO EXAMINE EXTERNAL POLICIES AFFECTING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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THESE COUNTRIES' FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL PROBLEMS. THE COUNTRIES FOR WHOM PLANS ARE PREPARED IN THE FIRST INSTANCE WOULD BE LIMITED, PROBABLY TO THE FOUR THAT BEGAN THIS WORK UNDER CGFPI AUSPICES: HONDURAS, BANGLADESH, SENEGAL AND THE SUDAN. IBRD STAFF AND TANCO HAVE EXPRESSED SOME INTEREST IN ADDING INDONESIA TO THE LIST. WALTERS SAYS CANADIANS HAVE EXPRESSED SUPPORT FOR PROPOSAL IN DETAILED DISCUSSIONS AND THAT HE HOPES TO GET AGREEMENT FROM EUROPEANS LATER THIS WEEK, ESPECIALLY UK, FRANCE AND SWITZERLAND, AND POSSIBLY THE NETHERLANDS. WHILE THE FOUR RECIPIENT DEVELOPING COUNTRIES HAVE SUPPORTED WFC INITIATIVE IN GENERAL TERMS, WALTERS SAYS PROPOSAL HAS NOT BEEN DISCUSSED WITH THEM IN DETAIL BECAUSE READING FROM POTENTIAL DONORS WAS NEEDED BEFOREHAND. HE SAID SUDAN WOULD POSE BIGGEST PROBLEM, SINCE IT CONSIDERS PLAN PREPARED FOR CGFPI TO BE COMPLETE AND READY TO BE FINANCED. AMONG INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS CONCERNED, IBRD AND UNDP APPEAR POSITIVE AT SENIOR LEVELS, ALTHOUGH DOUBTS HAVE BEEN EXPRESSED BY TECHNICIANS. FAO WILL NOT BE APPROACHED FORMALLY UNTIL CONCLUSION OF CURRENT ROUND OF PRELIMINARY TALKS. BECAUSE OF CURRENT FAO ANIMOSITY TOWARDS WFC, SAOUMA IS LIKELY TO REJECT INITIATIVE OUT OF HAND UNLESS CONSIDERABLE SUPPORT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED. WE MADE CLEAR TO WALTERS THAT THIS SUPPORT MUST INCLUDE THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. FINALLY, WALTERS SAID HE MAY TRY TO CONVENE INFORMAL MEETING ON THIS ISSUE IN LATE APRIL, SUGGESTING

BELLAGIO AS A POSSIBLE SITE FOR THIS PURPOSE. PURPOSE OF THIS MEETING WOULD BE A PRELIMINARY EXPLORATION AMONG PRINCIPAL AGENCIES AND COUNTRIES OF HOW TO DEVELOP A FRAMEWORK FOR FURTHER ACTION.

4. WALTERS STATED HE INTENDS TO FOCUS RESERVES DISCUSSION ON THREE ISSUES, I.E. SIZE OF RESERVE, THE QUESTION OF PRIORITY ACCESS FOR NEEDY DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, AND THE ISSUE OF DOMESTIC FOOD SECURITY SYSTEMS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. WALTERS WAS INFORMED THAT THE U.S. POSITION ON LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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THESE ISSUES HAD BEEN EXPRESSED IN THE GENEVA MEETINGS AS FOLLOWS: THE U.S. SEEKS AN INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM OF RESERVES IN THE RANGE OF 30 MILLION TONS; THE CONCERN FOR ACCESS TO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF NEEDY LDCS IS MET IN OUR PROPOSALS FOR AN EXPANDED FOOD AID CONVENTION WITH PROVISIONS FOR AN ADDITIONAL AMOUNT OF UP TO TWO MILLION TONS IN THE EVENT OF SEVERE FOOD PRODUCTION SHORTFALLS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES WITH SERIOUS ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES; IN THOSE FEW CASES WHERE A DOMESTIC SECURITY RESERVE IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES WAS MERITED, INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE WOULD BE PROVIDED. WE DO NOT SEE THE COUNCIL AS A FORUM FOR ADVANCING THIS ISSUE. SUBSEQUENTLY WALTERS SAID HIS ONLY OBJECTIVE ON THIS ITEM WAS TO ACHIEVE A GENERAL STATEMENT ABOUT THE NEGOTIATIONS WHICH REFLECTED THE COUNCIL'S CONCERNS ABOUT FOOD SECURITY AND WHICH WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO THE MAJOR PARTICIPANTS IN THE GENEVA TALKS, I.E. INDIA AND EGYPT IN ADDITION TO EC AND MAJOR EXPORTERS.

5. ON FOOD AID ISSUE, WALTERS EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR U.S. OFFER OF 4.47 MILLION TONS COMMITMENT TO A NEW FOOD AID CONVENTION MADE IN GENEVA. HE STATED THAT EC DELEGATES IN GENEVA HAVE BEEN AUTHORIZED TO OFFER UP TO 1.6 MILLION TONS AS THEIR SHARE OF A NEW CONVENTION AND THAT POSSIBILITY OF OPEC MEMBER CONTRIBUTIONS WAS BEING PURSUED BY WFC DIRECTOR HANNAH WITH SHIHATA LATER THIS WEEK. SUGGEST FODAG FOLLOW-UP WITH HANNAH.

6. ALTHOUGH FIRST PUSHING FOR ANUALIZATION AND INCREASED ACCESS FOR WFC, WALTERS CLARIFIED THAT HIS ONLY OBJECTIVES ON INTERNATIONAL EMERGENCY RESERVE ISSUE WERE TO OBTAIN AGREEMENT THAT 500,000 TON RESERVE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED A CONTINUING NEED, RATHER THAN AN INTERIM MEASURE UNTIL AN OVERALL RESERVES AGREEMENT IS NEGOTIATED, AND THAT
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"LIQUIDITY" OF PLEDGES BE CLARIFIED, I.E. THAT DONORS

PRESENT A CLEARER IDEA OF WHAT PROPORTION OF PLEDGES ARE IMMEDIATELY AVAILABLE TO WFP. WE STATED OUR CONCERN THAT WFC SHOULD AVOID PREEMPTING OCTOBER 1978 CFA DISCUSSION OF ALL EMERGENCY USES OF FOOD AID, INCLUDING EMERGENCY RESERVE, APPROXIMATELY DOLLARS 45 MILLION OF FUNDING IN WFP, AND BILATERAL PROGRAMS. WE ALSO BELIEVED THAT SOME ACKNOWLEDGEMENT WAS REQUIRED OF NEED FOR EFFECTIVE USE OF EMERGENCY FOOD AID SUPPLIES. WALTERS AGREED TO GIVE FURTHER CONSIDERATION TO BOTH CONCERNS.

7. IN NUTRITION, WALTERS SAID SOLE OBJECTIVE WILL BE TO REVIEW THE REPORT OF THE ACC SUBCOMMITTEE AND PUSH FOR PROGRESS IN FORMULATING A COUNTRY-BASED "ACTION PROGRAM." HE ALSO STATED THAT THE WFC HAD REQUESTED WITHOUT SUCCESS A CATALOGUE OF NUTRITION ACTIVITIES IN THE UN SYSTEM, SIMILAR TO THAT PROPOSED BY US DELEGATION OF FAO AD HOC COMMITTEE ON NUTRITION, AND THAT THIS REQUEST WOULD LIKELY BE REPEATED. WALTERS ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE COUNCIL OUGHT TO IMPRESS MORE HEAVILY ON ITS MEMBERS THE CONCEPT THAT NUTRITION IS, IN ESSENCE, A QUESTION OF GREATER EQUITY IN THE DISTRIBUTION OF INCOME.

8. WALTERS HAD HOPED THAT WORK BEING DONE BY THE INTERNATIONAL FOOD POLICY RESEARCH INSTITUTE (IFPRI) WOULD FORM THE BASIS OF A DISCUSSION OF AGRICULTURAL INPUTS, BUT THIS WORK IS UNLIKELY TO BE READY IN TIME FOR THE SESSION. WITHOUT THIS, HE HOPED TO FOLD THE INPUTS QUESTION INTO THE OVERALL DISCUSSION OF INCREASING AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION. HE WANTED TO AVOID THE EXTREMES OF GLOBAL GENERALIZATIONS AND ARGUMENTS ABOUT SPECIFICS THAT WERE TOO NARROW, SUCH AS A DOLLAR 20 MILLION FUND FOR SEED INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT.

9. THROUGHOUT HIS CONVERSATIONS WALTERS REFERRED TO THE POOR STATE OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE WFC AND FAO. HE
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REPEATED THE STORIES ABOUT ALL REQUESTS OF EITHER AN ADMINISTRATIVE OR SUBSTANTIVE NATURE HAVING TO BE SUBMITTED IN WRITING AND APPROVED BY THE OFFICE OF FAO'S DIRECTOR GENERAL, AND STATED THAT FAO WAS DOING NONE OF THE BACKUP WORK IN PREPARING DOCUMENTATION FOR THE COUNCIL MEETING. HE VENTURED THE THEORY THAT SAOUMA VIEWS THE 1979 WORLD CONFERENCE ON AGRARIAN REFORM AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT AS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR FAO TO ASSUME THE MANTLE OF THE WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE OF 1974, AND COINCIDENTALLY TO OVERSHADOW THE WFC.
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10. WALTERS ALSO REFERRED TO THE PROBLEM OF A LACK OF COORDINATION AMONG WFC LEADERSHIP. A PART OF THE PROBLEM WAS SIMPLY A CONFLICT IN HEAVY TRAVEL SCHEDULES, WHICH

LIMITED THE TIME AVAILABLE FOR CONSULTATION. IN ADDITION, HE SAID THAT IT WAS DIFFICULT TO GET EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR HANNAH TO FOCUS ON SPECIFIC ISSUES, AND THAT TANCO WAS PRIMARILY CONCERNED IN ACTIVITIES WHICH WOULD ENHANCE HIS IMAGE. TANCO, WHO IS RUNNING FOR REELECTION WOULD NOT BE INVOLVED AGAIN IN PREPARATORY WORK BEFORE APRIL, SO THAT HIS INPUT AT THE PRESENT CRUCIAL STAGE WAS LIMITED.

11. ALTHOUGH HE WAS CRITICAL OF THE ROLE OF SOME ROME PERMREPS AND RELUCTANT TO HAVE THEM INVOLVED IN SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSION WALTERS STATED THAT HE WAS PLANNING TO CONTINUE THESE SESSIONS AND WOULD DISTRIBUTE SECRETARIAT DOCUMENTATION FOR THE MEETING APRIL 15. WHILE HE VIEWED THE MEETING OF REPRESENTATIVES IN ROME AS ONE LOCUS OF DISCUSSION, HE EXPECTS THAT THE MAJOR ISSUES REMAINING WILL BE RESOLVED IN CAPITALS. HE DOES NOT EXPECT THE QUESTION OF NEW WFC SITE TO ARISE PUBLICLY DURING THE JUNE MEETING, BUT IS NOT AVERSE TO CORRIDOR CONVERSATIONS ON THE SUBJECT. FUTURE PROGRAM OF WORK WAS NOT DISCUSSED,
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THOUGH ALL PARTIES RECOGNIZED THIS TOPIC SHOULD RECEIVE MORE THAN PASSING ATTENTION IN THE JUNE MEETING. VANCE

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /004 R

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY MEXICO

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FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 069982 ACTION ROME INFO USUN NEW YORK
MAR 18.

QUOTE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE STATE 069982

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MORE THAN PASSING ATTENTION IN THE JUNE MEETING. VANCE
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Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
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Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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Errors: n/a
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Film Number: D780120-0632
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t197803126/baaafcdb.tel
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Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 676b5ebb-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
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Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
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Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3166542
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: WORLD FOOD COUNCIL (WFC) FOURTH SESSION
TAGS: EAGR, PORG, UN, WFC
To: ROME INFO USUN N Y
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/676b5ebb-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
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